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October 22, 1965

Anatoliy F. Dobrynin, Ambassador of the USSR
W. Averell Harriman, Ambassador at Large

I lunched today with Dobrynin at one o'clock at his invitation. He was less relaxed than usual as he was worried about getting to New York to meet Gromyko who was on his way back from Cuba. The weather was clouding over and he was afraid that he would not be able to fly. He left the table once and when he returned said, "No planes are flying so I am taking the train to New York." Feeling that he was anxious to do other things, I left as soon as lunch and coffee was finished, at 2:30.

He started in by giving me Mr. Kosygin's personal regards. He commented, "You had two talks with Mr. Kosygin. That is unusual." I replied that I didn't find that unusual since in 1959 I had a ten-hour talk with Mr. Khrushchev and saw him a second time at lunch at our Embassy. He commented that Mr. Kosygin did not have the same personal habits of long discussions; they were brief and to the point. He asked how the President had received my report on our conversations. I replied that he was much interested, and particularly amused by Mr. Kosygin's saying that they had all voted for him even though their votes hadn't been tallied, but were frankly disappointed in his later actions which looked more like the position of Goldwater. I told the Ambassador that I had explained to Mr. Kosygin how wrong he was in this respect.

This led

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This led to a rather extensive discussion about Viet-Nam. Dobrynin asked why we didn't talk to the ^{North} Vietnamese; when was the last time we had approached them directly; and why we insisted on going through an intermediary -- to all of which I pointed out we had had no encouragement, that one can't talk to people who won't talk to you.

I chided him that his Government wasn't sufficiently courageous to take a position, that they were too afraid of the attacks of Red China. Such sensitivity to the attacks from Red China, I suggested was unwise and unproductive.

I pointed out that we (Soviet Union and United States) were taking parallel action on the Subcontinent and that this was a mature way to behave. We then had some discussion about the problems between India and Pakistan. He expressed the opinion that the difficulties were so great that he didn't see how there could be an immediate settlement. I emphasized the importance we placed on keeping conversations going. Pakistan would be unwilling to relax unless there was some hope of conversations which might eventually lead to some solution. The United States had no position on what the solution might be but I personally felt that since neither side would give up to the other, and self-denial was characteristic of the people of the Subcontinent, some sort of autonomy for Kashmir or the more restricted area around the Vale might be the ultimate solution. There were already people in India who felt such a solution would be possible. No Indian Government could propose it, however. I suggested perhaps the Soviet Union might be willing to make some proposal to encourage a settlement between the two.

In the present situation I told him I thought both were at fault. Pakistan had started the trouble by infiltrating saboteurs and India had overly reacted. He seemed to accept this as an analysis of the situation. I said we wanted to keep friendly terms with both sides and I felt the Soviet Union had been wise in establishing a position of reasonable confidence with the Pakistanis. We didn't like their intimacy with Red China and I assumed the Soviet Union felt the same way. He didn't protest.

I asked him

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I asked him about Tito and his health. He said he hadn't heard there was anything basically the matter except an attack of the flu. I repeated some of the things that Tito had told me. I said I thought Tito was realistic, in some ways more so than the Soviet Union. If the Soviets really wanted to come to an understanding with us, why did they support Castro and liberation movements in Latin America.

He said he was looking forward to hearing from Gromyko about his visit to Cuba. He claimed that he didn't know why Castro was permitting people to leave the country. He asked if we would ever be willing to make a settlement with Castro and I said if the Soviet Union and Castro both decided it was to their interest to abandon creating of trouble in other parts of Latin America, there might be a basis for talking about it.

I expressed the opinion that the Soviet Union was not getting much out of the money that it was investing in Cuba and Latin America and that they would learn in time if not already that these investments were unprofitable. He then argued about social conditions in Latin America. He maintained we were supporting the status quo and didn't recognize there was a revolutionary spirit in Latin America to overcome the social injustices. I pointed to the Alliance for Progress and said if they were really interested in getting rid of social injustices we would be glad to work with them in overcoming such injustices not only in Latin America but elsewhere in the world, but that we would constantly oppose Communist revolutions to establish dictatorships of the proletariat. They would have to make up their minds to abandon that method before we could work together. I asked him when they would be sufficiently objective to be willing to achieve stability in the world and work together with us to achieve real social and economic progress. I suggested the parallel actions on the Subcontinent had encouraged me to believe that some day that might be possible.

We had some argument about who misunderstood whom, but he did not argue against my comment that there were a number of different ways of achieving progress in the underdeveloped countries other than Communist revolution.

I asked him

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I asked him a bit about why the Soviet Government didn't permit their own people to have freer expression. I said I had noticed they had recently clamped down on some writers who wanted to tell the truth as they saw it. He countered by attacking us for our rigid support of the status quo in Latin America and the under-developed countries.

I told him Mr. Kosygin had convinced me that Soviet leaders wanted to come to some understanding on the control of nuclear weapons, but I found too much rigidity in the way to achieve that objective. An important aspect was to develop a method to make it possible for such countries as India, UAR, Israel and Germany to forgo permanently the development of independent nuclear capability. He took refuge in arguing that if the United States and the Soviet Union signed a nonproliferation agreement, other countries would follow. I explained why this wouldn't be automatic and even if these countries adhered to an agreement there would be a chance of their pulling out at some future time.

He referred to the statements of Shastri regarding Indian policy. I said, "Yes, but you know Bhabha." He said, "Yes, we know him very well." I said, "Then you know he is pressing for Indian nuclear development." He said, "Yes, but he's not the Government." He took refuge in saying that this was a matter that our good friends Foster and Tsarapkin would be talking about.

The conversation drifted back to Viet-Nam, Dobrynin maintaining that we were unrealistic when we didn't accept the fact that "the Viet Cong speaks for the people." We argued about who spoke for South Vietnamese opinion, unprofitably along familiar lines.

The conversation was in good humor throughout. He seemed especially interested to know our point of view about India and Pakistan settlement of Kashmir; what were our real hopes and expectations for a solution re Castro; and how we sought an end to the fighting in Viet-Nam.

I tried to get across to him that I didn't think any real relaxation of tensions would take place until the Soviets abandoned
their support

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their support of liberation movements and wars of liberation and were ready in a common-sense way to work together for greater world stability and social and economic progress rather than their revolutionary concepts. I suggested they ought to leave the latter to China.

He handed me a letter from Matskevich, Minister of Agriculture of the USSR in which the Minister thanked me for sending him material he had asked me for, on the changes in production and location of slaughter houses in the United States since his visit in 1955. The Minister wrote, "I found these materials very interesting," and expressed his "appreciation of the attention you gave to my request." (unusually cordial)

It was left that we would get together again when we had more time. The Ambassador suggested some day next week.

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